



# Private First Class David Hutchinson

Just four days into a year-long tour in Afghanistan, Private First Class David R. Hutchinson manned a MK-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher in the turret gunners position of the third vehicle in a convoy. The convoy contained 17 soldiers in four vehicles from the 420<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade. As the vehicles passed through a steep mountain pass, 15-20 enemy attacked with Rifle Propelled Grenades (RPG), machine guns, and automatic rifle fire.



*Private First Class David Hutchinson conducting pre-deployment training.*

From their positions on the high ground the enemy was able to fire down into the Engineer’s protective turrets. After striking the first and last vehicles with RPGs the enemy launched a ground assault against the convoy. Hutchinson quickly determined that an enemy machine gun position was the key to the enemy’s assault. He directed his MK-19 fire on that position and destroyed it. Enemy fire now concentrated against Hutchinson. He responded with MK-19 fire against the exposed enemy troops. Hutchinson expended an entire can of ammunition, destroying positions and killing at least 5 enemy soldiers before an RPG struck the crew compartment of his vehicle. RPG shrapnel impacted his right leg and caused him to collapse into the cab of the vehicle.

The convoy was now able to exit the ambush. Laying severely wounded in the crew compartment, Hutchinson noticed his first sergeant had serious wounds to his head, neck, and shoulder. Hutchinson disregarded his own wounds and administered buddy-aid to the wounded first sergeant. By the time the convoy had traveled the 1.5 mile to a medical evacuation site, Hutchinson had stabilized



*420<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade Soldiers preparing for Convoy Operations in Afghanistan.*

the wounded first sergeant. Once the MEDEVAC helicopter arrived, Hutchinson refused to be carried on a stretcher, and walked to the helicopter. This act freed two additional soldiers to provide security for the evacuation site. Because of the severity of his wounds Private First Class Hutchinson was evacuated back to the United States. Hutchinson was awarded the Silver Star Medal for his actions.